

MARKET STREET



“And this the message we have received of Him, and declare unto you...” (1 John 1:5)

MESSENGER

Market Street church of Christ

514 West Market Street
P.O. Box 388
Athens, Alabama 35612
Phone (256) 232-1525

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes..... 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship..... 10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship..... 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes..... 7:00 p.m.

Elders

Albert Bowers.....(256) 233-4847
Jerry McGlocklin.....(256) 232-7620
Kenneth Smith.....(256) 233-2050
Bonnie Sutton.....(256) 232-2081

Deacons

Marty Adams(256) 233-5147
Rusty Brand(256) 233-7343
Tim Craig(256) 233-4597
Joel Hamm.....(256) 230-6223
Bobby McGuire(256) 232-7887
Frank Noblitt(256) 777-0725
Stuart Wilson(256) 233-6291

Evangelists

David A. Cox.....(256) 233-8910
E-mail: david.a.cox@att.net
Warren Glass.....(256) 233-6086

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MarketStreet-church.org

MARKET STREET MESSENGER

is published in the interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Market Street church.

David A. Cox, Editor

Volume I

March 15, 2009

No. 11

“Sin Doesn’t Work”

Paul Earnhart

“The punishment for sin is sin.” My mind bridled a bit upon first seeing Augustine’s words in print. They seemed to be suggesting that all of sin’s consequences were limited to this – worldly inconveniences. What about judgment? What about hell? I remonstrated. But second thoughts on the matter have left me feeling that the words are more true than false. The punishment for sin is built-in. No arbitrary add-on penalties are needed to enhance the total disaster that sin by its very nature produces.

There is a fundamental reality which most human beings have never faced – the universe we inhabit is spiritual. It is the handwork of the spiritual God (John 4:24) and is governed in such a way as to always be in harmony with the great spiritual principle that emanate from the very nature of God Himself. The “world” that is at war with the Almighty (1 John 2:15-17) is not the one which He created but a pseudo-world of dark values which has been imposed by Satan on the face of truly spiritual cosmos. The real world is wholly resistant to evil because the universe that God made is in league with Him. As Deborah and Barak sang of the defeat of the Canaanite hosts led by Sisera: “From heaven they fought the stars. From their courses they fought against Sisera” (Judges 5:20). As for the righteous, they shall be “in league with the stones of the field; and the beast of the field shall be a peace with thee” (Job 5:23). To live as a carnally mined man in a spiritual world is a swim upstream, an endless and hopeless struggle against the grain of reality.

The sinner is a one-dimensional man in a three-dimensional universe. He will never fit in. C. S. Lewis once observed that trying to make a man run on sin was like trying to make a gasoline engine run on water. First of all, by its very nature it will not run on water; and secondly, if the effort to make it do so is continued long enough, it won’t run on gasoline either.

I have said all this to make the point that the punishment for sin is not arbitrary, but is intrinsic to the nature of sin, the nature of God and

the nature of the world. The punishment for jumping off a ten story building or eating a pint of arsenic is not arbitrary either. The consequences are built into the nature of the act when attempted in the kind of world we live in. The law of gravity and the nature of the human digestive system will exact their own penalty. The same is true for sin. Sin doesn't work. Not in the world. Not with this God.

Sin and wickedness will not work with Jehovah because He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil" (Habakkuk 1:13) and cannot by His very nature have fellowship with sin (1 John 1:5, 6). The fact that a man's sins separate him from God (Isaiah 59:1, 2) rests not on divine whim but upon divine nature and the moral rule of the universe demand this alienation. The "law of sin and death" (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23) functions out of this reality. The separation from God that sin brings results in spiritual death. No man can live apart from the source of life. Adam and Eve learned this to their dismay.

Sin will not work with man. The spiritual rebel is at war with his own nature. As Augustine noted in his well known address to God: "Thou has made us for Thyself and we are restless until we rest in Thee." There is in every man created in the image of God a deep affinity for goodness and love. That should be no surprise to us. Like Paul, we "delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Romans 7:22) but sin sets us to fighting against ourselves until we are left in wretchedness (Romans 7:23, 24). The transgression of Adam and Eve caused them to cower in fear before God had ever accused them (Genesis 3:8). Their flight was from an accusing voice within (Proverbs 28:1). We all learn soon enough that our headlong retreat from God is also a futile effort to escape ourselves. If we continue on this escape routine it will eventuate in a kind of intellectual and moral suicide (Romans 1:21; 1 Timothy 4:2).

Sin will not work with others. A man at war with God and with himself cannot be at peace with his fellows. The delight that Adam felt when first he saw his mate (Genesis 2:23) was turned to accusation and recrimination when sin entered the picture (Genesis 3:12). Man's refusal to reverence God always leads to strife and injustice in his treatment of others (Romans 1:28-31). The problems that plague all human relationships from families to international relations find their

genesis not in poor technique but in sin. From the day that man declared his independence from God he has followed a crimson path of violence and inhumanity (Genesis 4:8; 6:5, 10).

In his letter to Titus Paul looks back briefly at how things were before the kindness and love of God had intervened: "For we also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another" (Titus 3:3). That is the kind of "success" we can expect our rebellion against God to bring us. It is remarkable that we ever thought we could win in a war against God, against our very own nature, and against the nature of the universe. It should have been seen as a hopeless venture on the fact of it, with all the marks of inevitable disaster. Sin just doesn't work. And it never will.

-via *Needmore Bulletin*; Haleyville, Alabama.



Peer Pressure

Bob Waldron

Much of God's covenant with Israel of old dealt with human relations. Various and sundry laws pointed out how the Jew was to conduct himself among his peers. One of these admonitions was, "Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). This was a very important decree; it showed the danger of peer pressure and pointed out very explicitly the dangers of being led astray by evil men. Peer pressure was an important factor in their lives; it has been from that time to the present. And perhaps as never before, peer pressure is an issue we have to wrestle with.

A leading educator noted that peer pressure is the strongest influence on young people today. He stated that in most cases it is twice as strong as the influence of home and family, and yields a far greater influence than religion. I share this educator's convictions. All young people want to be accepted by their peers. And if to do so means disobeying parents and selling out personal convictions, some are willing to do so just to be a part of the bunch. In dealing with young folks and their problem of peer pressure, we often quote and expound

on 1 Corinthians 15:33 – “Evil companionships corrupt good morals.” I contend this is a very important verse dealing with this subject. This admonition does caution against the dangers of peer pressure being exerted by those who are void of spiritual convictions and virtues. Let us continue to warn our young people of the dangers of their associates that rob them of their virtues.

But is all peer pressure centered in young people? Does this pressure cease when we become adults? Well, certainly at all stages of life there are peer pressures put on us by those with whom we mix and mingle day by day. The Bible is not silent on this matter. Men and women of God have always faced immense pressures in dealing with their peers. And when God has spoken, He has always done so with a stern warning against letting our associates rob us of our moral integrity.

One of the most striking examples of this occurred in the life of Peter. Peter is one of our favorite Bible characters. He was truly one of Christ’s more ardent followers. We hear him saying, “Even if I must die with thee, yet I will not deny thee” (Matthew 26:25). We hear him declare, “Lord, with thee I am ready to go both to prison and death” (Luke 22:33). But on that fateful night of the arrest and mock trial of the Lord, Peter “followed afar off” (Matthew 26:53); he stood with the wrong crowd, the enemies of the Lord (Matthew 26:69). And upon being asked of his allegiance to Christ, he cursed, swore, and denied that he even knew Him (Matthew 26:69-74). Peter, when alone in a crowd of unbelievers who were the enemies of Christ, relented to peer pressure.

What a lesson for the Christian today. I contend that when we are alone, with the wrong crowd, those with no regard for the Lord nor spiritual values, we are at the most vulnerable moment of our spiritual life. And so often, like Peter, the pressures from our peers lead to our downfall.

There are numerous other examples in the New Testament on this subject. Peer pressure played a leading role in the rejection of Christ by the rulers of the synagogue (John 12:42-43). The Scriptures tell us they believed on Him, “but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God.”

Likewise, peer pressure was the deciding factor in

the heinous crime of Herod (Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:23). Herod feared and respected John, but his oath, along with “them that sat at meat with him” (him peers) prevented him from backing down on his promise, and resulted in the vile deed of having John the Baptist put to death. In this we see the influence and power of wicked men and the insidiousness of peer pressure.

But there is another side of the coin of peer pressure. Not all the characters of the Bible collapsed under the pressure of their associates. Many stood, often alone, in the fact of severe pressures put on them by others.

Let us ever be aware of the immense pressures put on us by our peers, especially those with no regard for God and spiritual values. And let us profit from the mistakes others make and redouble our efforts to not yield to these peer pressures as they did.

-via *The WORD At Lakeview*, Lake City, Florida.

News & Notes

THE SICK:

In The Hospital:

Jerry Tucker; Athens-Limestone Hospital –rm. 200

Reba Adams; Crestwood Hospital – rm. 432

Peggy Taylor; Athens-Limestone Hospital – ICU

At Home:

Wendell Sherbert Annie Mae Bragg

Jerry Gilbert Mary Norton

Carl Hargrave June Dawson

Martin Casteel Yvonne Sherbert

Polly Davis Ann Locke

Benton Hardy Jeff Waddell

Kennedy Pepper Uyles Reid

Angela Green Joe Giardina

Matt Poff

Limestone Health Facility:

Essie Belle Bates, rm. 108 Mary Smith, rm 85

Rosella Pugh, rm. 33 J.D. Clanton, 11E

Sarah (Jennie) Green Lorene Bradford, rm.107

Athens Convalescent Center:

Betty Bates, rm. 17

Limestone Manor:
Ruth Owens, rm. 80

Shut-In:
Sarah Halbrook, Glade Retirement, Memphis, Tenn.
Jimmy Killen, at home
Reba Adams, at home
Mauvis Phillips, at home
Majorie Lambert, at home
Fred Varnell, at home
Ellis Dunnavant, at home

MILITARY SERVICE: Remember all those that are away serving in the military for our country. Those among us that are serving away from home:
Cody Brown; Iraq

BIBLE DRILL: The children's Bible drill will be this afternoon at 4:30 in the small auditorium on the west wing. I hope that all of our children will be able to be present.

SYMPATHY: We want to express our deepest sympathy to *Stuart Wilson and all the family* in the passing of Stuart's grandfather, *Billy Lovell*. He passed away this past Thursday and his funeral will be this afternoon at 2:00 at the Spry Funeral Home Chapel.

GOSPEL MEETINGS: The *Sardis Springs church* is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Thursday. *Dennis Abernathy* is the speaker in this meeting... The *Old Moulton Road church* in Decatur is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with *Cecil Cox* preaching... The *East Florence church* in Florence is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with *Jeff Henderson* preaching.

THE RECORD: Attendance – Week of March 8th.

Sunday:
Bible Classes..... 145
Morning Worship 162
Evening Worship..... 115

Wednesday:
Bible Classes..... 94

Remember Our Study Periods

Sunday Mornings at 9:45 a.m.
Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.

Come and Join Us As We Study Together

Men Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, March 15th:

Morning Worship

Announcements Rusty Brand
Song Leader Tyler Cox
Prayer Steven Bradley
Preaching Warren Glass
Lord's Supper
Presiding Larry Mitchell
Assisting Benton Ball
Serving Chris Sides Russ Wulfekuhl
..... Albert Bowers Tommy Burns
Closing Prayer Landon Adams

Evening Worship

Announcements Rusty Brand
Song Leader Tyler Cox
Prayer Kenneth Smith
Preaching David Cox
Lord's Supper Benton Ball
Closing Prayer Frank Noblitt

Other Assingments for Sunday March 15th:
Usher Tim Craig
Work Sound System Cory Nelson

Wednesday, March 18th:

Song Leader Marion Mitchell
Bible Reading (Proverbs 9:1-18)
..... Hunter Cox
Prayer Joel Hamm
Invitation David Cox
Closing Prayer Dwaine Allfrey

Sunday, March 22nd:

Morning Worship

Announcements Jerry McGlocklin
Song Leader Frank Noblitt
Prayer Albert Bowers
Preaching David Cox
Lord's Supper
Presiding Marty Adams
Assisting Marion Mitchell
Serving Curtis Glass Dan Lovell
..... Marvin Putman Delmer Carter
Closing Prayer Tim Craig

Evening Worship

Announcements Jerry McGlocklin
Song Leader Frank Noblitt
Prayer Marion Mitchell
Preaching Stuart Wilson
Lord's Supper Marty Adams
Closing Prayer Tommy Burns

Other Assingments for Sunday March 22nd:
Usher Russ Wulfekuhl
Work Sound System Danny Johnson